



Games



34 2 5

Chapter 1 by Goran Bakoc

I love playing games. I was playing them all my life. There was always a game plan and purpose for each game I played. Played some with my friends, some with parents, co-workers... I played with everyone. Nobody knew he is in my game. Some of them were good games. Some were bad. I regret I've played some of them. Some, I'd play again. This is my story.

Chapter 2 by MJZ



Unbearable. The man opposite me has taken forever on every single move. The fingers of his left hand continue to drum the table and the way his joints twitch reminds me of spiders. His right hand moves over the board as if he's hoping for some change in atmosphere or a shifting in the cosmos to tell him which piece to move. Look, I want to tell him, it's checkmate in six moves no matter what you do. I break all gentlemanly convention and stare at him, hard, trying to convey my message through a newfound psychic connection. Nothing changes.

An hour later and we're shaking hands. Ten minutes after that and I'm unlocking my door. Another five and my computer's glare is lighting the flat, fans whirring, ready for another game. Connection established.

This was the shadow of the internet. The part that would get demolished, executed, wiped from memory if the people who wanted it taken down had more resources and intelligence than the people running it. As it stands, we're winning. Unlike the game from earlier in the day, the moves here would be quick and precise on both sides; it was a case of long-term strategy, years not minutes. The way to win was simple. Prevent the opposition from making the next move.

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